

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-identified application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An image search method of searching for a desired image from a plurality of images stored in storage means, comprising:

- a designation step of designating an arbitrary region in a search source image;
- a segmenting step of segmenting the search source image into a plurality of segmented regions;
- a first calculating step of calculating, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions, a ratio of ~~a size of~~ a region belonging to the designated arbitrary region ~~included in~~ to the segmented region ~~to a size of said arbitrary region~~;
- a setting step of setting a weight value, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions ~~based on each~~ corresponding to the ratio of each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions calculated in the first calculating step;
- a second calculation step of calculating image ~~similarity~~ similarities between the search source image and each of the plurality of images stored in the storage means by comparing the plurality of segmented regions of the search source image and segmented regions of each of the plurality of images stored in the storage means using the weight values set in the setting step; and
- an acquisition step of acquiring an image as a search result from the plurality of images on the basis of the image ~~similarity~~ similarities calculated in the second calculation step.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein
said method further comprises the drawing step of allowing an operator to
interactively draw an image, and
the search source image is the image drawn in the drawing step.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein the second
calculation step comprises a step of integrating the weighted similarities for the segmented
regions to obtain one of the image similarity similarities.

Claims 6-7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 1, further comprising
a display step of displaying on a display screen an image representing the image acquired in
the acquisition step as the search result.

Claim 9 (Original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the display step
comprises displaying a thumbnail image of the image acquired in the acquisition step.

Claim 10 (Original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the display step
comprises displaying an icon image corresponding to the image acquired in the acquisition
step.

Claim 11 (Original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the display
comprises, when one of displayed images is selected, displaying details of an image linked to
the image.

Claim 12 (Original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the display step
comprises displaying extracted images in an order of similarities.

Claims 13-15 (Canceled).

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): An image search apparatus for searching for a desired image from a plurality of images stored in storage means, comprising:

a designating means for designating an arbitrary region in a search source image;

a segmenting means for segmenting the search source image into a plurality of segmented regions;

a first calculating means for calculating, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions, a ratio of ~~a size of a region belonging to~~ the designated arbitrary region ~~included in~~ to the segmented region ~~to a size of said arbitrary region~~;

a setting means for setting a weight value, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions ~~based on each~~ , corresponding to the ratio of each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions calculated by the first calculating means;

a second calculation means for calculating image ~~similarity~~ similarities between the search source image and each of the plurality of images stored in the storage means by comparing the plurality of segmented regions of the search source image and segmented regions of each of the plurality of images stored in the storage means using the weighted values set ~~in~~ by the setting means; and

an acquisition means for acquiring an image as a search result from the plurality of images on the basis of the image ~~similarity~~ similarities calculated by said second calculation means.

Claim 17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (Original): The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein

said apparatus further comprises drawing means for allowing an operator to interactively draw an image, and

the search source image is the image drawn by said drawing means.

Claim 19 (Canceled).

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said second calculation means integrates the weighted similarities for the segmented regions to obtain one of the image similarity similarities.

Claims 21-22 (Canceled).

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising display means for displaying on a display screen an image representing the image acquired by said acquisition means as the search result.

Claim 24 (Original): The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said display means displays a thumbnail image of the image acquired by said acquisition means.

Claim 25 (Original): The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said display means displays an icon image corresponding to the image acquired by said acquisition means.

Claim 26 (Original): The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein when one of displayed images is selected, said display means displays details of an image linked to the image.

Claim 27 (Original): The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said display means displays extracted images in an order of similarities.

Claims 28-30 (Canceled).

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): A storage medium which stores a control program for causing a computer to realize processing of searching for a desired image from a plurality of images stored in storage means, said control program comprising:

a code of a designating step of designating an arbitrary region in a search source image;

a code of a segmenting step of segmenting the search source image into a plurality of segmented regions;

a code of a first calculating step of calculating, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions, a ratio of ~~a size of a region belonging to~~ the designated arbitrary region ~~included in~~ to the segmented region ~~to a size of said arbitrary region~~;

a code of a setting step of setting a weight value, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions ~~based on each~~ , corresponding to the ratio of each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions calculated in the first calculating step;

a code of a second calculation step of calculating image ~~similarity~~ similarities between the search source image and each of the plurality of images stored in the storage means by comparing the plurality of segmented regions of the search source image and segmented regions of each of the plurality of images stored in the storage means using the weight values set in the setting step; and

a code of an acquisition step of acquiring an image as a search result from the plurality of images on the basis of the image ~~similarity~~ similarities calculated in the second calculation step.

Claim 32 (Cancelled).

Claim 33 (Cancelled).

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): An image search apparatus for searching for a desired image from a plurality of images stored in a storage unit, comprising:

a designation unit configured to designate an arbitrary region in a search source image;

a segmenting unit configured to segment the search source image into a plurality of segmented regions;

a first calculating unit configured to calculate, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions, a ratio of ~~a size of a region belonging to~~ the designated arbitrary region ~~included in~~ to the segmented region ~~regions to a size of said arbitrary region;~~

a setting unit configured to set a weight value, for each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions ~~based on each~~ , corresponding to the ratio of each segmented region of the plurality of segmented regions calculated by the first calculating unit;

a second calculation unit configured to calculate image ~~similarity~~ similarities between the search source image and each of the plurality of images stored in the storage unit by comparing the plurality of segmented regions of the search source image and segmented regions of each of the plurality of images stored in the storage ~~means~~ unit using the weighted values set in the setting unit; and

an acquisition unit configured to acquire an image as a search result from the plurality of images on the basis of the image ~~similarity~~ similarities calculated by said second calculation unit.